

Orphan Trains topic of talk

By Pat Schiefen
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Marilyn Holt of Abilene gave a talk about the Orphan Trains for the Sherman County Historical Society on Saturday afternoon at Wheat Ridge Acres Community.

The Orphan Trains brought orphans from cities in the east to rural areas for adoption and a better life. The first train came to Kansas in 1867, said Holt, and the practice continued until the beginning of the Great Depression.

She said that in 1849-50 there were an estimated 10,000 kids living on the streets or in orphanages in New York City. A methodist minister Charles Loring Brace is credited as being the founder of the Orphan Trains. The trains carried around 200,000 children to new homes. Kansas received 5,000 to 10,000.

Brace headed up the Children's Aid Society of New York and focused on the neglected street children and other children of poverty.

He felt adults were past redemption and that the fate of children could be changed. Brace believed helping the children would prevent a growing class of criminals who would prey on society to survive.

He started newsboy lodging houses, Sunday boys' meetings. Industrial schools, night schools and workshops. But he thought the best solution would be to remove homeless children in New York and send them to "good Christian homes" in the west. This was call placing out. The benefit to farm families was to furnish additional helping hands. The kids were not to be indentured servants or apprentices but taken into families as foster children, Holt said. Some were even adopted.

Holt said not all of the children were orphans. Some had only one parent who did not have the resources to raise the child or couples who did not have money to raise their children.

The families were not screened,

she said, and there was not a lot of follow up. The new profession of social work in the 1890s cut down on the numbers of children sent from the cities. Social workers tried to do things based on population and studies and tried to keep families together by providing support services.

The Children's Aid Society of New York was one of the groups that brought children to Kansas. Holt said there was only one train that brought 300 children to Kansas most of the time a group of 10 to 35 children aged 10 to 13 came. An agent was with the children.

The society would use the newspapers to let people know about the orphans, Holt said. First there would be an article about the society's work and then an ad when the children would arrive. The children would arrive at a town and be taken to a meeting place and the kids would be lined up for people to pick.

Holt said the other way orphans came to Kansas was through the New York Foundling Hospital. The hospital was a Catholic Charity and placed two to six year old children. This group made sure someone wanted them and the local priest was usually the one who found homes. Places these children were brought to were Hays, Salina, Victoria and Ellis.

The foundling hospital would sew a label on the kids' clothing or have a label on a string around their neck.

The way she researched was to look at agency records, newspaper articles and personal interviews. Holt said most of the children did not remain in contact with their original families especially the really young ones. But there were a few who did.

Holt said there have been several books about the orphan trains and Concordia has a museum with 30 years of collected information.



Marilyn Holt talked about Orphan Trains on Saturday afternoon at Wheat Ridge Acres. Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

Company wins safety award

The Scoular Company was awarded a Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program banner for its efforts to improve safety at its elevator in Goodland.

Ken Bieker of the state Division of Industrial Safety and Health, said he had made several trips to the facility to help them get the award. They were inspected first and given improvements to make. Then another inspection followed.

He said only one injury will knock the facility out of the program. By getting the award they get a two year exemption from Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspections.

Bieker complimented everyone who worked at Scoular because it took the work of all of them to get the award.

Terri Sanchez of the Kansas

Department of Labor Division of Industrial Safety and Health, said the Scoular facility was the only facility to get the award, she believed, in Goodland. There were only a few others in the area.

Sanchez said there were 152 Kansas facilities in the program with 75,000 workers. Kansas is second in the nation behind Texas. Nationwide there are 1500 sites in the program.

Tom DiGiorgio, Vice President for Asset Management and Loss Control for the Scoular Company from Omaha, Neb., said safety efforts were never done but continued every day and every hour.

At the ceremony were Facility Business Manager Jeff Bhend, Kyle Sorensen, Bill Knox, Andy Potterf, Zach Potterf, Paul Buhr and Krista Hamilton.



Employees of Scoular Company visit before their safety award is given on Tuesday, April 20, at On the Bricks. Ken Bieker (far right) of Occupational Safety and Health Administration at Topeka stands

next to Tom DiGiorgio of Scoular Company.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News



Story Hour Kids draw on the sidewalk in front of the Goodland Public Library.

Snapshot in day of library

The Goodland Public Library joined Kansas libraries in a statewide project, "Snapshot: A Day in the Life of Kansas Libraries," to demonstrate how important academic, public, school and special libraries are to the citizens of Kansas.

On April 14, Goodland Public Library compiled statistics, customer comments, photographs and other data chronicling a typical library day.

Locally, 175 patrons visited the library; 142 items were checked out; two programs presented to a total attendance of 34; 25-reference questions answered; and 42 individuals stopped in the library to use a computer.

Here's a few of the local comments collected: "Our library is a great asset to the community, it has awesome resources patrons shared some of the things they come to the library for: resume writing, job searches, checkout books and mov-

ies; look at magazines, use the computers, attend programs and it is all free." Other comments were, "Our library is a great meeting place, visit with friends and the librarians," and one patron summed it up by saying, "I love this place!"

The information collected at Goodland Public Library will be added to those of other libraries across Kansas to demonstrate the valuable services libraries deliver every day.

Goodland Library Director Karen

Gillihan said, "I know our patrons enjoyed being a part of this historic day. Libraries are the heartbeat in our communities. Our staff and the patrons they serve have a unique relationship that isn't duplicated in any other public service center."

"Snapshot: A Day in the Life of Kansas Libraries," is endorsed by the American Library Association and sponsored by the Kansas Library Association, the Kansas Association of School Libraries, and the State Library of Kansas.

corrections

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Proposals for Animal Control Officer

The City of Goodland is seeking competitive proposals for individuals interested in the duties of animal control officer. The duties will include, but not be limited to, responding to calls for animal pick-ups and delivery of animals to the animal pound. Individuals with an interest in the position should submit a sealed proposal to City of Goodland, 204 W. 11th, Goodland, Kansas 67735 by May 7, 2010. Proposals should include all monetary costs and requirements, time availability, and a demonstrated ability to undertake the position duties. Questions regarding the duties or this process should be directed to Doug Gerber, City Manager, at 890-4500 or cmanager@goodlandks.us.



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